

**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**  
**CAMPGROUND HOST VOLUNTEER DESCRIPTION**

**INTRODUCTION**

Campground hosts are ambassadors for our state parks who are provided free camping on site while volunteering. Living at the park in their own camper, hosts assist staff with light maintenance, provide information to the public, and complete some administrative work for the park.

Applicants are required to fill out the appropriate paperwork, including an agreement to have a federal criminal history and drivers's license check completed annually prior to being interviewed and/or accepted as a volunteer. Potential hosts must appear at the appropriate park office for a personal interview prior to being selected.

**LIABILITY**

The host is entitled to Workers' Compensation for injuries suffered while performing any volunteer work or projects for the DNR. The host is responsible to report such injuries immediately to the DNR staff site supervisor, who will assist in filling out the necessary forms. The host does not receive an appointment to state service or salary from the State of Iowa.

The host is acting as an representative of Iowa State Parks. Therefore, the host is provided protection from personal liability within the scope of the host's work assignment, and only as described by Iowa Code chapter 669. "Within the scope of the host's work assignment" means performing approved DNR work, with all the training and safety precautions a DNR employee is required to take for that task. All situations will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Any tort claim resulting from the host's criminal activities will not be covered by the DNR and the host shall indemnify the DNR for any claims based on such acts.

The host is responsible for maintaining insurance on their personal recreational vehicle, its contents and any personal vehicle used during their service with the DNR. Proof of insurance must be examined by DNR staff prior to volunteering as a campground host.

**PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

For periods of time during the year as established in the Campground Host Program Agreement, the volunteer serves as a "live-in" host at the campground in the designated park. The primary responsibility is to assist campers by answering questions and explaining regulations which apply to them. Volunteers must be familiar with state park regulations and the reasoning behind them.

Volunteers must also be familiar with local points of interest and the location of services that might be requested by campers such as towing, groceries, places of worship, tourist attractions and local events.

Volunteers must perform light maintenance work around the campground such as litter pickup, sweeping and stocking of restrooms.

Volunteers will act as a liaison between campers and park staff; providing information to park staff on potential problems, disseminating information to campers, etc.

Volunteers may be requested to assist in campground public relations or educational activities.

Volunteers will do no law enforcement other than being observant and advising campers and visitors of unintentional infractions. Flagrant violations will be reported to the park personnel responsible for the campground.

Volunteers must set an example by being a model camper practicing good housekeeping at all times in and around their assigned site and by observing all rules and regulations.

Volunteers are expected to work weekends and holidays during their term as host.

### **CONTROLS OVER POSITION**

Hosts generally work independently. The park staff are available daily to help answer questions or discuss problems. Volunteers are responsible to the Park Ranger or Park Manager. DNR staff provide orientation for hosts and will assist them throughout their stay with any problems that may arise. Volunteers are not permitted to operate state vehicles or other state equipment such as mowers without prior review of their driving records and with written permission from the DNR.

### **OTHER WORK REQUIREMENTS**

- Hosts are required to provide their own recreational vehicle as their residence and transportation vehicle as well as insurance for those vehicles.
- Volunteers must display a willing attitude to deal with campground users in a cheerful and helpful manner.
- Volunteers must present a neat and pleasing appearance of their camp site at all times and be courteous but firm in dealing with the public.

### **TRAINING**

DNR staff will provide training to each host on site for the following procedures:

- Emergency telephone numbers
- Severe weather
- Drowning or suspected drowning
- Chemical spill or pipeline rupture
- Damages and injuries
- Suspected illegal drug or alcohol use
- Public postings

### **PERIOD OF SERVICE**

Volunteers are required to be available for a minimum of one calendar month. Volunteer positions for longer terms are available as mutually agreed upon by the volunteer and DNR staff. The camping season runs from April 1 through October 31. Time off and off duty schedules are mutually determined between the volunteer and DNR staff.

### **THANK YOU**

Thank you for your willingness to serve as a campground host. We appreciate your interest and willingness to help our state parks. Campground hosts are a crucial part of our parks success that help us provide excellent customer service and safety to all campers and visitors.

Any further questions may be directed to the Office of Volunteer Services at 515-281-0806 or [DNR.Volunteer@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:DNR.Volunteer@dnr.iowa.gov).